

**BOROUGH OF EAST RETFORD**

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR 1942

BY

W. C. DAVIDSON

M.D., CH.B., D.P.H., D.T.M. and H.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

RETFORD
WHARTONS LTD, GROVE STREET
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PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
YORKSHIRE PENNY BANK BUILDINGS,
MARKET PLACE, RETFORD

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present to you the Annual Report on the Health of the Borough during the year 1942. Again the report is brief, owing to present conditions ; it shows only an outline of the work carried out by the Public Health Department during the year.

The report has been compiled in accordance with the instructions contained in the Ministry of Health Circular No. 2773.

Dr. David S. Clark resigned his appointment as Medical Officer of Health in March 1942, and I took up duty in his place on 7th May, 1942.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

W. CAMPBELL DAVIDSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

AREA 4,657 acres

*Registrar-General's Estimate of Resident Population
mid-year 1940 15,900

*Number of inhabited houses 4,413

Rateable Value (1st April 1942) £93,753

Sum represented by a Penny Rate £357/15/8

*It has been considered inadvisable meantime to publish later figures.

VITAL STATISTICS

LIVE BIRTHS—	Total	M.	F.
Legitimate	249	116	133
Illegitimate	25	16	9
Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population ..			16.73
Birth Rate of England and Wales per 1,000 population ..			15.8
STILL BIRTHS—	Total	M	F
Legitimate	13	9	4
Illegitimate	2	2	—
Rate per 1,000 TOTAL Births			51.90
Rate per 1,000 estimated population			0.92
Rate per 1,000 population of England and Wales			0.54
DEATHS—	Total	M	F
	176	81	95
Death Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population ..			10.74
Death Rate per 1,000 estimated population in England and Wales			11.6

The preparation and issue of the Areal Comparability Factor is being suspended under present conditions, so that the Death Rate adjusted accordingly cannot be given.

MATERNAL MORTALITY—

Deaths from puerperal causes :

Puerperal and post-abortion sepsis Nil

Other maternal causes Nil

Maternal Mortality for England and Wales per 1,000 live births
—2.01.

INFANTILE MORTALITY—

	Total	M	F
Deaths of legitimate infants under 1 year	13	7	6
Deaths of illegitimate infants under 1 year	1	1	—

Death Rate of all infants per 1,000 live births	51.09
Death Rate of legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births—52.21	
Death Rate of illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births—40.00.	

MORTALITY—

The deaths include those of 22 persons in institutions outside the Borough : 12 males and 10 females.

The above rates are calculated on the estimated population given by the Registrar-General.

The causes of death were—

Diphtheria	2
Tuberculosis of the respiratory system	8
Other forms of tuberculosis	4
Syphilitic diseases	1
Cancer of buccal cavity and oesophagus (m) and uterus (f)	4
Cancer of stomach and duodenum	2
Cancer of breast	2
Cancer of all other sites	2
Diabetes	2
Intra-cranial vascular lesions	23
Heart disease	33
Other diseases of circulatory system	13
Bronchitis	7
Pneumonia	5
Other respiratory diseases	3
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	3
Appendicitis	2
Other digestive diseases	6
Nephritis	9
Premature birth	6
Congenital malformations, birth injuries, infantile diseases	5
Suicide	1
Other violent causes	3
All other causes	30

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA

War Time Day Nursery. During the year a War Time Day Nursery was constructed, and was opened on 16th November 1942. The building (a pre-fabricated hut) and furnishings, etc., were provided by the Ministry of Health, which Ministry has also undertaken responsibility for the running costs.

The Nursery is intended to be available for children of mothers engaged on work of national importance who cannot otherwise arrange for their children to be looked after during the day-time, while they are at work.

Scabies. This disease has greatly increased in prevalence during the past few years, and Retford has not been spared. It became necessary to intensify the measures adopted to check the spread of the disease. The Scabies Treatment Centre, opened originally for the treatment of evacuees, was regularly used for the treatment of children. In addition the Council approved certain alterations of, and equipment in, premises in the Corporation Yard so that it was possible to treat adult cases and contacts who could not be treated otherwise.

Frequent thorough inspection of the school children together with investigation of home circumstances of cases by the School Nurses, the Sanitary Inspector or the Medical Officer of Health all helped to control the spread of the disease, and at the end of the year there appeared to be a definite improvement in the position.

During the year 198 cases were notified to, or ascertained by, the Public Health Department. Of these 7 were treated at home, 2 at hostels, and 189 at the Scabies treatment centres. Disinfestation of clothing and bedding was carried out as necessary.

It was not found necessary to prosecute in any case under the Scabies Order 1941—most patients were very willing to co-operate.

The method of treatment was by the employment of Benzyl Benzoate, on two occasions, and the results of treatment were

found to be uniformly satisfactory, and reflect credit on the workers who carried out the treatment at the Centres.

Diphtheria Immunisation. A national publicity campaign to secure an increase in the number of children immunised against diphtheria was pursued during the year. In the summer months the Council approved local publicity in the form of press advertisements in conjunction with the East Retford Rural District. Cinema slides were displayed at the local cinemas, while leaflets, posters and other means of calling the attention of parents to this important work were utilised.

These measures produced not unsatisfactory results. During the year 435 children under 5 years of age, and 874 children between the ages of 5 and 15 years, making a total of 1,309 children, were completely immunised. At 31st December 1942, it was estimated that 63% of Retford children under 5 years of age and 77% of children between the ages of 5 and 15 had been immunised.

It is of interest to note that 20 cases of diphtheria in children under 15 years of age were notified during the year ; that two deaths occurred in non-immunised children and that **no deaths from diphtheria occurred in children who had been immunised.**

No other changes of importance in the provision or functioning of the health services occurred during the year.

CHILD WELFARE AND ANTE-NATAL CLINIC

No. of sessions held during 1942	256
No of sessions attended by the Medical Officer	232
No of Examinations made (children)	1818
No. of examinations made (mothers)	2162
Average number of children and mothers examined per session	17
No of individual mothers attended Centre	604
No. of individual children attended the Centre	1207
No. of visits paid by children to the Centre :		
Under 1 year	5184
1—5 years	3642
	Total	..8826
No. of individual ante-natal cases attended	—Evacuees..	494
	Retford..	174
No. of individual post-natal cases attended	28
Visits paid by Health Visitor to :		
(1) Children under 1 year of age	1984
(2) Children between 1 and 5 years	2212
	Total..	..4196

Services of a Consultant. During the year, 22 expectant and nursing mothers (including 8 evacuees) were referred for Mr. Stacey's opinion.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Water Supply. Analyses of samples of water supplied by the Borough Water Undertaking were satisfactory.

Sanitary Inspection. The work was well supervised by the Inspector and was efficiently carried out.

TUBERCULOSIS, 1942

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 1 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—2 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2—3 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3—4 ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
4—5 ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
5—10 ..	3	—	2	2	—	—	—	—
10—15 ..	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—20 ..	2	1	—	1	—	—	1	—
20—35 ..	5	1	2	—	—	1	—	—
35—45 ..	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—65 ..	4	1	—	—	2	—	—	—
65 and over ..	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Totals ..	16	4	6	3	2	2	1	—

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—Borough of East Retford

	Total Notified	Admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths	South Ward	East Ward	West Ward
Scarlet Fever	12	10 (a) (2 nursed at home) 29 (a)	nil	7	—	5
Diphtheria	29	—	2	3	16	10
Pneumonia	8	—	3	4	2	2
Erysipelas	7	1 (a)	nil	4	2	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	2 (b)	nil	1	—	1
Measles	14	—	—	5	4	5
Whooping Cough	10	—	—	5	2	3
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	20	1 (c). 9 (d)	8	6	6	8
Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis	9	2 (d)	4	2	4	3
	111	54	17	37	36	38

- (a) North Carlton Isolation Hospital
- (b) Jessops Hospital, Sheffield
- (c) R.N. Hospital, Plymouth
- (d) Ransom Sanatorium, Rainworth

REPORT OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR FOR THE YEAR 1942

HEALTH DEPARTMENT,

RETFORD

To the Medical Officer of Health.

SIR,

I have much pleasure in presenting to you my report on the work done during the year 1942.

45 complaints were received and the premises visited, nuisances being found in all but three cases.

79 informal notices asking for the abatement of nuisances were served, and in eight cases these were followed up by statutory notices under the Public Health Acts. The difficulties in the way of extensive property repairs were almost insuperable, but there appeared to be sufficient available labour to carry out vital repairs to roofs, drains, spoutings, etc.

The shortage of dust-bins was very acute but the changes enforced upon the householders by the salvage schemes are lengthening the life of the bins. If nothing but dry ashes and broken pots are placed in the bins the zinc coating of the bins remains intact and a bin should last 15 years or even longer.

A certain amount of overcrowding exists in the town, and although some serious cases came to my knowledge little could be done to help the unfortunate people. The Corporation are the owners of many dwelling-houses but changes of tenancy are infrequent especially amongst the four-bedroom type house. There are still a few houses subject to demolition orders which are occupied, and the position of these tenants is not enviable.

The common lodging house in the Borough was visited from time to time. This is not kept so well as it used to be, largely due to matters beyond the control of the keeper. Owing to the casual labourers in the town the lodging house has been more fully occupied than usual.

Food Inspection. This work has taken up the greater part of my time.

The numbers slaughtered during 1942 were :

Cattle ..	3,038	Sheep ..	13,794
Calves ..	393	Pigs ..	343

This total of 17,568 compares with 16,655 slaughtered in 1941.

I was assisted in the inspection of the carcasses by Mr. J. Hunt, Assistant Sanitary Inspector to the Retford Rural District Council, and all the carcasses and organs were inspected at the slaughter houses before removal.

The percentage of animals found to be tuberculous were :

	1941	1942
Cattle	22.5%	23.4%
Pigs	8.8%	11.9%
Calves	1.2%	1.0%

The total weight of meat condemned at the slaughter houses was 118,608 lbs. as against 100,226 lbs. in 1941. This is a very serious loss of meat, but it must be remembered that the casualty animals brought for immediate slaughter owing to disease or accident represent a considerable proportion of the total loss. All condemned meats are sent to a firm who convert it into animal foods, fertilizers, and other products for commercial use so that there is no waste.

From a public health point of view centralized slaughtering provides for a thorough control of all meat for human consumption, and has done away with the objectionable practice of slaughtering food animals in congested areas in the centre of the town.

The imported meat, both frozen and canned, is all dealt with in Retford, but owing to strict supervision in the countries of origin this meat is free from signs of disease. A small percentage of loss occurs owing to decomposition, but even under war conditions this loss is negligible.

Foods at the shops are subject to inspection and I am frequently called in by the traders to examine doubtful specimens. The relations between the Health Dept., the Ministry of Food and the traders, over unfit food, are excellent, and the procedure is simple and straightforward.

The food condemned at the shops is set out below :

Tinned foods (in variety)	346	Eggs	703
Tinned meats (6lb. tins)	319	Fowls	1
Bacon and Ham	114 lbs.	Onions	61 lbs.
Cheese	66½ lbs.	Biscuits	14 lbs.
Butter	38 lbs.	Flour	21 lbs.
Lard	2½ lbs.	Chocolate ..	2¼ lbs.
Jam	41 lbs.		

The number of visits paid to dairies and cowsheds was 78. Owing to war conditions the number of milk retailers has declined, which in my opinion is a step in the right direction. At the end of the year there were only five retailers of milk other than the producer-retailers, and many of these latter have their premises outside the boundary of the Borough.

During the latter part of the year steps were being formulated for the stricter control of the milk industry, and although the schemes did not mature in 1942 it was obvious that the changes would lead to a better milk supply.

Owing to the great delay in obtaining equipment the Retford Co-operative Society Ltd., were not able to complete their new pasteurising plant during the year under review. This was unfortunate but was due entirely to matter outside the control of the Society. The old plant was kept in the best possible state of preservation, and on the whole the milk was properly pasteurised.

Whilst there has been some decline in the standard of cleanliness on the farms, it must be admitted that the farmers have had many difficulties to contend with owing to labour shortage and increased acreage of arable land. At the end of the year there were 21 producers of milk in the Borough, and of these 13 were also retailing their milk. Five of the farms were producing accredited milk.

The bakehouses were inspected during the year. 20 visits were made and 2 notices for contraventions were served. All bakers were asked to pay very special attention to personal hygiene owing to the danger of contaminating some of the substitute foods now in use in bakehouses. There were 10 bakehouses in use in the Borough at the end of 1942.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

These cases are all visited promptly upon notification, enquiries made and contacts traced wherever possible. 86 visits were made to houses to control infection, and once again diphtheria was the cause of most trouble. A few visits were made to houses where scabies was troublesome and I was usually able to persuade the adult members of the family to come to the cleansing stations for treatment.

CLEANSING

This important work, together with salvage, occupied much time throughout the year. I am responsible for the collection and disposal of house refuse and salvage, and also for the cleansing of the streets and public conveniences. During 1942 we changed our methods of collection and commenced to collect house refuse only in one week and salvage only in the next. This proved to be very successful and resulted in an increased collection of salvage and a saving in man power. On the whole the public co-operated well but there are a few awkward people who still mix there salvage and refuse and cause much unnecessary work.

The year did not pass without labour difficulties but the Essential Works Order applies to the whole department and this was of considerable assistance. Most of the street sweeping is done by men over 60 years of age and they kept our streets at a high standard of cleanliness.

During 1942 502 tons of salvage were collected and sold. We were greatly assisted by the ladies of the Salvage Committee and the street salvage stewards. Both the Committee and the stewards met monthly and did a great deal of hard work especially in propaganda. As a result of this Retford occupied a high place in the County returns, and the sale of the salvage produced a sum of money sufficient to cover the expenses of the work.

SUMMARY OF VISITS

To Slaughter houses.. .. .	536
To Infectious Disease	86
To Premises re Nuisances	121
To Properties under notice	61
To Dairies and Cowsheds	78
To Bakehouses	20
To Shops re Food Inspection	400
To Offensive Trades	12
To Premises re Rats.. .. .	36
To Factories and Workshops	18
Re House Refuse and Salvage.. .. .	595
To Public Mortuaries	25
Miscellaneous Visits	31

Total..2,019

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

F. R. SMITH,

Sanitary Inspector

